

Close Reading Guide

Please review the following short video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DZbSlkFoSU>

What is the goal of the woman in the video?

What skills is she lacking and how may these skills have assisted her?

The College and Career Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education reflect the most essential *standards* and *skills* of the Common Core State Standards needed by adults to function more effectively in home and community life and achieve in higher education and the workplace.

The CCRS ELA Standards cover five areas:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Language; and
- Reading Foundational Skills

There are nine CCRS ELA Reading Anchor Standards. The 2014 GED® Test focuses mostly on the ELA College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard (CCRS) #1 and Common Core Standard #10. (The College and Career Readiness Standards, CCS #10 is embedded in all 9 ELA CCRS Anchor Standards).

Anchor #1 - Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Anchor #10 - Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

The other eight ELA Reading Standards are embedded in three major areas:

- (Determine and analyze) *Key Ideas and Details* (of a complex text)
- (Interpret, analyze, assess) *Craft and Structure* (of a complex text)
- (Identify, integrate, analyze) *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas* (of a complex text)

These standards are measured at different levels as well on the GED® Test.

CCRS ELA Anchor Standards

All ELA standards that are measured on the GED® RLA test focus on three key shifts or instructional advances: Text Complexity, Evidence, and Knowledge. *Learners must be able to read complex text and draw conclusions based on evidence in order to build knowledge across content areas.*

Close Reading

The strategies and skills embedded in the standards are essential for the GED, higher education, the workplace, and home/community life. Close reading is one of the #1 tools that people may use to apply those strategies and skills.

What is close reading?

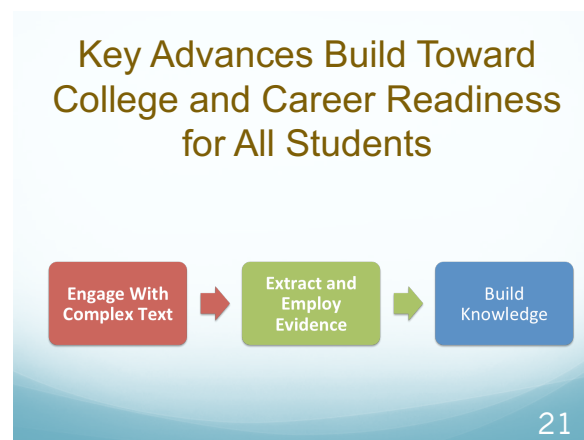
“It is a careful and purposeful rereading of text.” _ Douglas Fisher

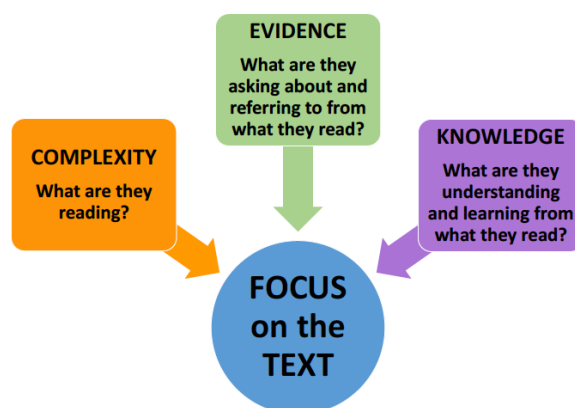
Watch the following video (approx. 2 ½ minutes) of Douglas Fisher describing close reading in order to understand the importance of close reading and what it looks like. As teacher in high school and higher education, he has researched and written numerous books on close reading. (Approximately 5 ½ minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5w9v6-zUg3Y>

Basically, it is CCRS Anchor #1 –Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

When you read closely, you are implementing CCRS for Adult Education Three Key Shifts/Advances





It includes:

- Using short passages and excerpts
- Diving right into the text with limited pre-reading activities
- Focusing on the text itself
- Deliberately rereading of the text, examining meaning thoroughly and methodically
- Using reading skills in conjunction with one another to observe and analyze
- Asking higher-order, critical thinking questions that go beyond general, surface information to:
 - Understand central ideas and key details
 - Meanings of individual words and phrases
 - The text structure
 - The development of ideas

In order to draw conclusions about the author's purpose and point of view and the evidence they use to support it.

Instead of learning each reading skill in isolation, students learn to use the skills within the context of a complex text.

What do close readers do as opposed to those who do not closely read?

“When doing a close reading, the goal is to closely analyze the material and explain why details are significant. Therefore, close reading does not try to summarize the author's main points, rather, it focuses on “picking apart” and closely looking at why the author makes his/her argument, why is it interesting, etc.” <http://teachthought.com/literacy/what-close-reading-actually-means/>

| Close Readers | Non-Close Readers |
|--|--|
| Read with the purpose of identifying the author's purpose and meaning. | Do not read with a clear purpose. They mostly summarize. |
| Read carefully more than once. | Read quickly once. |
| Ask text-dependent questions. | Ask questions that may have answers not found in the text. |
| Analyze and critically interact with a text. | Identify surface-level information. |
| Make inferences and draw conclusions based on evidence. | Draw conclusions based on personal opinion. |

How will students use close reading? The following are several examples:

On the GED

- Be able to perform the high impact indicators of the GED test

Higher Education and Training

- Read and respond to research and training materials

Workplace

- Interpret policies and procedures and communicate more effectively

Home Life and Community

- Make more effective purchasing decisions and communicate more effectively

What are some examples, you may have?

Tip: All of the above information may be shared with students to introduce students to and engage them in close reading.

Planning for close reading involves a few steps.

1. Choose complex text or examine the resource you will use and determine the text complexity and vocabulary features.
2. Choose text dependent questions.
3. Plan the close reading strategies:
 - a. Annotations
 - b. Discussion questions
 - c. Writing prompt
 - d. Reflection

After you finish planning, you will be ready to implement by scaffolding students through close reading:

1. Chunk the text or ask students to chunk the text

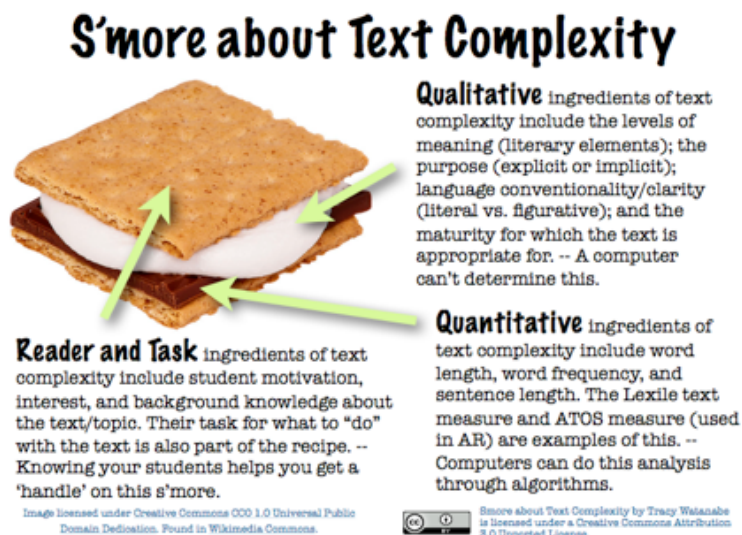
2. Model annotating and have students annotate
3. Facilitate discussions
4. Facilitate a writing activity
5. Facilitate a reflection activity

Step #1 – Choosing the Right Text – CCRS Key Shift #1

The first step in planning is to either:

- a) choose a complex text and determine which short passage the student will closely read and the features that makes the text complex. This will also assist you in developing the text dependent questions. OR
- b) Analyze a current resource for text complexity features.

Choosing a text means determining its quantitative and qualitative complexity and its relationship to the intended reader.



Ask, "Is the Text Worth Reading?"

For informational text:

- Is it at the correct NRS level?
- Is it similar to what is on the GED and higher education?
- Is it material that may be seen in the workplace?
- Is it short enough to be reread?
- Is it relevant to various content areas?

For literary text

- It is similar to what may be seen on the GED?

Quantitative Analysis:

There are tools that you may use to determine the quantitative complexity or the grade level of a text.

The ATOS Analyzer (most preferred)

<http://www1.renaissance.com/Products/Accelerated-Reader/ATOS/ATOS-Analyzer-for-Text>

The Lexile Analyzer

<https://lexile.com/educators/tools-to-support-reading-at-school/tools-to-determine-a-books-complexity/the-lexile-analyzer/>

OPTIONAL: Click on the ATOS Analyzer and practice copying and pasting a text into the analyzer. This feature also allows you to attach a WORD doc.

When choosing a text or using a text from a resource, it is helpful to identify its qualitative complexity or the features that make it complex.

The following two resources are rubrics that may assist in identifying the features that make a text complex. Developed by the System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES), these tools are shortened versions of the ones that were developed by the CCSS developers.

Qualitative Analysis of LITERARY Text Complexity

http://sabes.org/sites/sabes.org/files/resources/Qualitative%20Analysis%20chart%20brief%20vertical%20LITERARY_0.pdf

Qualitative Analysis of INFORMATIONAL Text Complexity

<http://sabes.org/sites/sabes.org/files/resources/Qualitative%20Analysis%20chart%20brief%20vertical%20INFORMATIONAL.pdf>

You may use the Text Complexity rubric tool to determine the features of text complexity, which will better assist you in developing text-based questions or evaluating questions provided by the resource.

See example below:

Speech

Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rfkonmlkdeath.html>

Text Complexity Analysis (See Attached PDF)

TIP: Analyzing text complexity may seem cumbersome at first; however, after practice, it may be completed in a matter of minutes. If you do with a few key texts that you use frequently, you will have a small library that you may use repeatedly.

Step #2 – Choosing Text –Based Questions – CCRS Key Shift #2 - Finding Evidence

The second key shift is finding evidence. As they closely read, students will need strategies they can use to find evidence in complex text to support their conclusions.

Ask, "Are these questions worth asking?" These are questions that demand evidence in the text.

- Surveys of employers and college faculty cite the ability to read well and draw accurate conclusions using evidence as key success in college and the workplace.

- The ability to cite evidence differentiates strong from weak student performance on national assessments.
- The ability to find and use evidence to support claims is a hallmark of strong readers and writers.

Questions that accompany a text should:

- Require students to make valid claims that square with text evidence.
- Ask questions that do not require information or evidence from outside the text.
- Be intentionally sequenced to gradually deepen student understanding.
- Focus student attention on the text, not away from it.

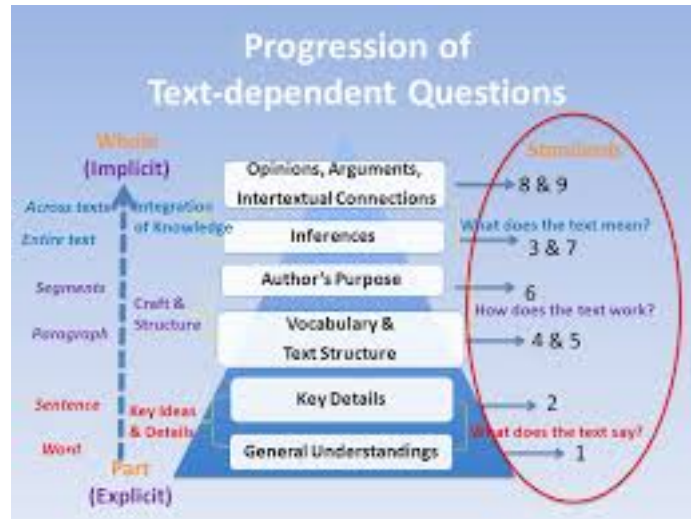
Criteria for text-based questions:

- Are the questions text-dependent and text-specific? Do they require readers to produce evidence from the text?
- Do the questions address the central ideas of the text? Do they focus on words, sentences, and paragraphs, as well as larger ideas, themes, or events, building understanding?
- Do they focus on difficult portions of text to enhance reading proficiency?
- Do they gradually build understanding? Take particular note to see if they support students' ability to address the culminating task.
- Do they involve analysis, synthesis, and evaluation? (Some may be literal)
- Do they include prompts for writing and discussion?

Simply put, text-dependent questions identify the text as the “expert” in the room.

As students read and reread short passages of text, you can scaffold them through a series of text dependent questions that move them up the levels of critical thinking. These levels coincide with the categories in the CCRS for ELA.

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas



Example:

Below is a list of text-dependent questions that students may ask and answer as they closely read the speech *Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rfkonmlkdeath.html>

Key Ideas and Details (What does the text say?)

- What was the sad news that Kennedy was sharing and with whom was he sharing it?
- What does Kennedy believe that the “vast majority of white people and the vast majority of black people” in the United States want?

Craft and Structure (How does the text work?)

- What does Kennedy mean by “greater polarization” in line 12 of the speech?
- What is one problem and solution that Kennedy identifies?

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (What does the text mean?)

- What was Kennedy’s purpose in sharing the poem from Aeschylus?
- What is Kennedy’s key message?

In order to encourage students to answer the questions with evidence from the text, you may add to each question statements such as:

Try one of these cues after a Text Dependent Question:

- Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.
- Remember to use words and phrases from the text to prove your answer.
- Be sure to include specific evidence from the text to support your ideas.
- Be sure to include specific words and phrases from the text to support your opinion.
- Use specific words or details from the text or illustrations to support your ideas.
- Inferences should be supported by text.
- What in the text helped you to know?
- What words and phrases did the author use that led you to your answer?

Taken from

“A Close Look at Close Reading” p.10 by Beth Burke

Recommended Resources:

Below are text-based question stems and frames that you may use to create text-based questions or evaluate and add to the text-based questions in the curriculum resources that you are currently using.

- *Close Reading in Three Reads (See attached PDF)*
- *A Close Look at Close Reading pgs. 12-14 by Beth Burke (See attached PDF)*
- *Text Dependent Question Stem and Samples for Informational and Narrative Texts (See attached PDF)*
- *Text Structure Text Frames (See attached PDF)*

Step #3 - Plan the close reading strategies:

- Annotations
- Discussion questions
- Writing prompt
- Reflection

In Step #1 – you determine the qualitative features of text complexity in order to determine the elements of the text to focus on when teaching close reading strategies, including challenging vocabulary words and phrases.

In Step #2 – You determined the text-based questions that will help you determine what questions the students should be asking and answering as they closely read the text.

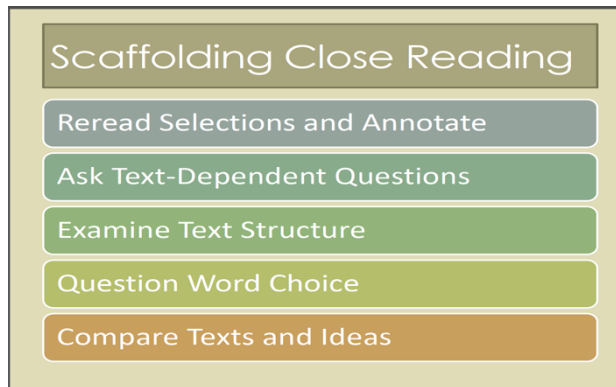
Next you may, choose the annotation and graphic organizer tools, discussion questions, a writing prompt, and a reflection activity

Now you are ready to determine which strategies you will model for students to use in implementing a close reading activity. What annotations will you have them use? What will be the discussion questions? What will be the writing prompt? What will be the reflection piece?

Finally, you will scaffold them through the process.

1. Chunk the text or ask students to chunk the text
2. Model annotating and have students annotate
3. Facilitate discussions
4. Facilitate a writing activity
5. Facilitate a reflection activity

As discussed, close reading involves rereading a text and digging deeper each time, mining for key ideas and details, exploring the craft and structure, and integrating knowledge and ideas in order to draw conclusion about the author's theme in narrative texts or claims in informational text. You may scaffold students through the close reading process with three close reads. Three close reads are what is recommended, however, you may differentiate these reads based on the students' reading levels. Students will conduct three close reads with the text-dependent questions that you have created.



The close reading guide, "Three Close Reads," (insert PDF) shared previously may be used to guide students through the close reading process of informational text. This guide offers general questions that you may use as a basis for your text-specific questions.

These questions will vary depending on your qualitative analysis of text complexity. For example, if the analysis of text complexity revealed extremely complex vocabulary, you may want to include more vocabulary questions, which fall under craft and structure and word choice. If the analysis involved a high level of complexity in text structure, you may want to spend more time in text structure analysis questions, which also fall under craft and structure.

Annotating the text as they read, may be a powerful tool to engage students in close reading. When students annotate, and take notes as they read, they are more likely to:

- slow down,
- focus,
- analyze, and
- interact with the text.

You may differentiate the number of reads, the text-dependent questions, and annotation symbols based on the reading level of the students.

The *Three Close Reads Annotation Chart* (see attached “Three Close Reads Annotation Char PDF) provides examples of how a student may annotate informational texts with each read. It also includes recommended graphic organizers and a writing activity.

Dig Deeper

Annotation Ideas (See attached “Annotation Ideas” PDF) provides example of annotation charts that may be differentiated for different reading levels within the class.

Below are two examples of informational texts that have been annotated.

Article of the Week #6

Mark the text

1. Number each paragraph
2. Chunk: 1-3 / 4 / 5-6 / 7-8 / 9-11 / 12-13 / 14-15
3. Circle key terms
4. Underline the claims
5. Left margin: What is the author SAYING?
6. Right margin: What is the author DOING? (POWER VERBS)

What NBA Stars and Occupy Wall Street protestors have in common

Source: Paul Frymer and Dorian T. Warre, Bangor Daily News, November 2, 2011

Saying?

Doing?

LeBron has little in common w/ the 99%.

Contrasting LeBron James to the 99%.

1 LeBron James is as far as you can get from the 99 percent.

2 The NBA superstar is paid more than \$16 million a year as a forward for the Miami Heat and has a \$90 million contract with Nike. After his team lost the NBA Finals to Dallas in June, he told griping fans to go back to the humdrum reality of "the real world," while he retreated to his recently purchased \$9 million home in South Beach.

3 So James may seem to share nothing with the 99 percent — in Occupy Wall Street's terms, the vast majority of American workers, who suffer in a culture of unabashed greed that has created a historic gulf of inequality between the richest Americans and everyone else.

Who is like the 99%? b/c he is controlled by an owner.

4 But he and the other NBA players have something important in common with the 99 percent. James is an employee of the Miami Heat. Despite his recent tweet hinting that he will try to join the National Football League if the NBA lockout continues, he finds himself, like most Americans, beholden to the owners and managers who control his workplace and industry. If the owners want to lock out the workers, or leave the country in search of greater profits, he — like American workers whose jobs have disappeared overseas — is left with few options. He is beholden to team owners who are not always upfront about their revenue and profits, and who are claiming a right to make more money without equitably sharing it with the workers who make the huge windfalls possible.

Comparing NBA players to the 99%.

Players are accusing the owners of shady business.

5 In the split between NBA players and owners, the players are voicing frustrations that may seem awfully similar to what the Occupy Wall Street protesters are saying. The players are accusing the owners — who keep recording yearly profits as a group while claiming hardship and the need for belt-tightening — of playing by different rules; avoiding public scrutiny; and benefiting from a range of insider deals, bailouts and protections without sharing the profits.

Explaining the issues between the NBA players + owners

Conflict over revenue split

6 At issue in this dispute is whether the league can impose a tighter salary cap on the teams, which would effectively lower the salaries of the players. The other major conflict is over how "basketball-related income" — which includes revenue from the sale of tickets, parking, food at concession stands, player jerseys and broadcast rights — will be split between players and owners. Until now, players got a slight majority of this revenue. This made sense, since it was superstars such as Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, and now Kobe Bryant and LeBron James, who brought the league to new heights in popularity and profits. The owners, however, say it is unsustainable to maintain high salaries and existing profit margins. They want a 50-50 split of the basketball-related income.

7 The players have remained united and responded angrily to NBA Commissioner David Stern's initial threats of canceling the season. Dwyane Wade, James' teammate and one of the league's biggest stars, yelled at the commissioner in a heated meeting, saying: "You're not pointing your finger at me. I'm not your child." Steve Nash, two-time NBA most valuable player, questioned the owners' representation of their finances, tweeting, "Why are the owners unwilling to negotiate in

Annotating the Text

Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

Sample annotations

Major Points

? – Questions

Purpose – show understanding of the problem and hope for the future

E – Evidence or Examples

Words or phrases not understood

! – Surprise

The

1

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a **candor** and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

E – This is evidence of hope for future.

2

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

? – Had people stopped believing in leaders?

? – Are these personal values – like honesty or something else?

E – This is evidence of the problem.

3

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; **the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side;** farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

4

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

! Wow, this is like workers today with low wages.

following video provides an example of a teacher explaining annotation. If annotation is new to you, this video is highly recommended. It provides an example of marking up narrative text. The video is 12 minutes long.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LN5VMM_X60 (Links to an external site.)

TIP: If students cannot write on the text, they may use sticky notes and attach them to the related parts of the text OR write on a graphic organizer.

| | | |
|------------|------------------------|--|
| Section #1 | Words that confuse me? | |
|------------|------------------------|--|

| | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--|
| | Key points and details? | |
| | Things that surprise me? | |
| | Questions? | |
| Section #2 | Words that confuse me? | |
| | Key points and details? | |
| | Things that surprise me? | |
| | Questions? | |
| Section #3 | Words that confuse me? | |
| | Key points and details? | |
| | Things that surprise me? | |
| | Questions? | |

Choose Graphic Organizer

You may have students' complete graphic organizers of the text structure as the read or after the second or third read. You would've identified the text structure during your qualitative analysis of text complexity.

The following, provided in Module Two, is an example of text structure, text-based questions to ask an answer, signal words that may be circled, and graphic organizers to complete for each text structure. (Insert PDF of Text Structure Questions)

Choose Discussion Questions

It is very effective for students to discuss with the instructor or peers as they read. Choose from the text-based questions from each read for students to discuss. It is ideal that they discuss after each read. If they discuss after each read, they are more likely to engage, stay focused, and remember key ideas and details from each read.

Choose a writing prompt

You may have the students write after each read or respond to a writing prompt following the read. The writing prompt may prepare them for the GED® RLA test constructed response or Science extended response close reading question. The writing response after each read may be as simple as listing key ideas and details, writing a sentence after completing the graphic organizer, or stating the author's theme or claim with evidence.

Choose a reflection activity

A reflection activity provides students to state what they learned and how they learned for the purpose of thinking critically about learning and further solidify the learning. Below are a few examples of reflection tools.

Geometric Reflections

Identify One Key Idea That Squared With You

What Three Strategies or Tools Do You Plan on Implementing?

**What questions, comments or concerns
keep spinning in your head?**

Reflection Bookmark

**What Can I Do
Differently?**

- ✓ Re-read
- ✓ Take notes,
underline, highlight
- ✓ Listen more
carefully
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Get feedback from
peers/instructor
- ✓ Self-assess
- ✓ Access resources
- ✓ Ask someone for
help

Where Am I Going?

- ✓ What will I be able
to do at the end of
the lesson?
 - ✓ What concept or
skill is important
for me to learn and
why?
 - ✓ How will I show I
can do this?
 - ✓ How well will I
have to do it?
-

Where Am I Now?

- ✓ What am I learning and why?
- ✓ How well am I learning?
- ✓ What am I doing that is working/not working?
- ✓ What questions do I still have?

How Can I Close the Gap?

- ✓ What should I keep doing that's working?
- ✓ What can I do differently?
- ✓ What resources and tools do I still need?
- ✓ Where can I get help?

Scaffolding Steps:

Now you are ready for implementation.

1. Chunk the text and number the paragraphs of the short selection of text or ask students to do so.
2. Ask students to read the text and annotate a first read. (May choose to model annotating one paragraph for struggling students).
3. Facilitate a discussion of questions. Provide feedback as students discuss. You may have students paraphrase parts of the text.
4. You may have students list key ideas and details or summarize the theme or author's purpose.
5. Ask students to complete a second read, annotate, identify meanings of words and phrases, and possibly complete a graphic organizer of the text structure.
6. Have students share results with a partner. Provide feedback.
7. You may have students write the problem/solution and/or cause and effect.
8. Ask students to complete a third read, annotate, and identify the author's claim with supporting evidence, and elaboration.
9. Have students discuss conclusions with peers.
10. Have students respond to a writing prompt.
11. Ask students to reflect on learning.
12. Ask students to share reflections.

TIP: This process may be broken down into three lessons. It may be differentiated based on the student's reading level. You may differentiate the number of annotation symbols, the amount of reading, the complexity of the graphic organizers, etc.

The following are tips and techniques in engaging and scaffolding the students into close reading.

- Start with a picture that is of interest to the student and ask them to infer meaning. Ask them to cite evidence as to what caused them to draw the conclusions that they did.

- Text frames for introducing close reading. Basic statements or questions of a close read includes:
 - Let's look closer at this section of the text. / Let's investigate this part further. /
 - According to the text, ____ / Let's use evidence from the text to .. /
 - Let's see how the author... / Because we want learn how to write like the author ____
 - We need to look at this part of the text again in order to ____ * In order to read like a detective we need to be able to...
- Think aloud – show the student how you think aloud through a text. Demonstrate annotating a text, questions you would ask and answer as you move through the text, how you may complete a graphic organizer.
- Relate text to everyday life. Although we quickly want to get the student focused the actual text, drawing conclusions based on evidence, we can begin by connecting the theme to something with which they are already familiar, their interests and goals. If I can read this, I will be able to _____ at home, on a job, in higher education.
- Show students examples of an annotated text, a completed graphic organizer, etc.
- Questions to ask before they begin reading?
 1. What is my purpose for reading this?
 2. Who is the target audience?
 3. Why should I care?